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AMERICAN BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY
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BAPTIST CHURCH, NORRKÖPING, SWEDEN

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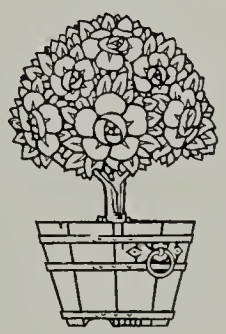

AMERICAN BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY .·. BOSTON, MASS., U. S. A.

Acknowledgment

THE following historical sketch is a revision of the former booklet which appeared in 1903 under the same name. It has been entirely rewritten, and is a wholly new account of missions in Europe, with different arrangement of contents and with several illustrations added. For this interesting and valuable story we acknowledge our indebtedness to the author, Rev. Frank Peterson, D.D., of Minneapolis, Minnesota, one of the District Secretaries of the Society.

View in Copenhagen, Denmark, near First Baptist Church

MISSIONS IN EUROPE

I. A SURVEY

IN speaking about foreign missions, our thoughts instinctively turn towards the Orient, for we usually connect foreign missions with Asia, Africa and the islands of the seas. It should not be forgotten, however, that several mission boards, including the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, carry on an extensive work in Europe also.

It is most interesting to trace the progress of modern Baptist missions in continental Europe by following the course of the earliest baptistries. The first baptistry was in the River Elbe, near Altoona, Germany; the second in Elsinore in Denmark; the third in the Cattegat, which washes the shores of Sweden; the fourth in the Baltic, near Jakobstadt, Finland; the fifth, where the Skager-Rak touches Skien, in Norway; and the sixth in the historic Neva, at St. Petersburg.

Germany

The events which led to the beginning of the work were all directed by the guiding hand of God. In 1834 a young American student, a Baptist, entered one of the universities of Germany. One of his vacations was spent in Hamburg, and while there he fell in company with a young German colporteur of that city. Both being Christians they were soon fast friends and naturally became interested in the discussion of matters pertaining

to the kingdom of God. Scriptural baptism was one of the questions discussed and the young German was led to read his Bible to see what the scriptures said. The result was that under cover of midnight darkness these two young men stepped down into the waters of the River Elbe, and there the colporteur was baptized. This young man was J. G. Oncken, founder of Baptist work in continental Europe. The American student was Dr. Barnas Sears of New York. This event was destined to develop into great historic importance.

Fuller particulars of the work in Germany will be given later in this narrative. The Holy Spirit had already selected a second field, as well as the man who was to break the soil, and that field was

Denmark

There lived in Odense, Denmark, a young man, the son of a Jewish rabbi, who, while assisting his father in the synagogue, was strongly impressed with the fact that the Hebrew service was but a dead formality. He spoke to his father about the matter, but could get no satisfaction. He sought light from some of his learned friends, but neither could they lead him out of his labyrinthine maze. Finally he heard of Mr. Oncken in Hamburg and determined to see him. This interview led to his conversion and he also was baptized in the Elbe. This young man was Julius Köbner. He was a man especially suited for this great calling. He was a poet, a preacher, a parliamentarian and an organizer. His work for Denmark, as well as Germany, was great. He gave to both the German and Danish Baptists the hymn books which have made such deep spiritual impress upon their lives and faith. He yearned to do something for Denmark, but knowing that none were allowed to preach in public except ordained ministers of the established church, he concluded to go quietly among the people of his province and by private conversation lead them to the thought of spiritual things. On one

occasion a discussion arose on the subject of scriptural baptism which so angered his host that Köbner was told to leave the house and go to people who were like-minded with himself. He replied that if he must go to such he would have to leave Denmark altogether. "No," shouted the enraged host. "I know of another idiot just like yourself. His name is Mönster, a jeweler in Copenhagen." On hearing this he cancelled all engagements and started immediately for Copenhagen. On his arrival in that city he had no difficulty in finding the jeweler's home. With a beating heart he touched the knocker, and the man who opened the door was Mönster. He told him briefly the occasion of his call. Mönster was jubilantly surprised and invited him into an inner room where were gathered a little company, reading and discussing the Bible. Imagine their joy when they found among them a man who was able to expound to them the word of God! He told them of a Baptist church in Hamburg, just such a church as they through the study of the New Testament had been led to believe existed in the apostolic times. The call of Peter to the household of Cornelius came in a different way, but the call of this modern Peter to this modern Cornelius was no less divine, and, so far as we know, it led to more decided results.

After some days of thorough searching of the Scriptures the little company expressed their desire to be baptized. Mr. Oncken was sent for, and on the night of October 30, 1838, at 228 Hammargade, Copenhagen, these believers related their Christian experience to Köbner and Oncken, and at three o'clock in the morning they left the house for the place of baptism, each going by a different route so as not to arouse the suspicion of the police. In the stillness of that early Sabbath morning, Oncken baptized them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. That day the first Baptist church in Denmark was organized.

The news of the work thus planted in Germany and Denmark spread to

where it reached the ears of a young man who was laboring among the seamen in Gothenburg. He became deeply interested in the new movement and determined to visit Oncken. He went to Hamburg and after an interview was so fully convinced of the truth that he asked to be baptized. When the young man, whose name was F. O. Nilson, reached home he preached with such power that several of his kinsmen and neighbors were converted and requested that they might be baptized. As the first administration of the rite in Germany was by an American, and the first in Denmark by a German, so a Dane, Mr. Forester, performed the first rite in Sweden at Vallersvik, at midnight, September 21, 1848. That very same night the first Baptist church in Sweden was organized. How little Nilson then could know what harvests would spring up from that early sowing: in Sweden a church now counting more than 50,000 members, and more than 29,000 among the Swedes in America. How little, too, he knew what a persecuting church had in store for him. Stones, stripes, fines, imprisonment fell to his lot and finally he was brought before the high court and sentenced to perpetual banishment. His exile was spent in America, and while carrying the ban of the high court in Sweden upon him, he busied himself in the work of his Master among his countrymen in Minnesota, organizing the first Scandinavian Baptist church in that state, which has now grown to 88 churches and about 7,000 members.

Nilson's banishment attracted wide attention throughout Sweden and led many to search the Scriptures to see if he really had tenable ground on which to stand. Among those who were led to investigate was a Mr. Möllersvärd. After a close examination of the Bible he came to the conclusion that Nilson was right. He was so deeply impressed that he too became converted and joined the Baptists, becoming one of their most eloquent preachers. It was through Möllersvärd that the Baptist mission was planted in

Finland

He had occasion to go to Oland, an island in the Baltic midway between Sweden and Finland, on a business trip. While there he preached with such power that many were converted. Some of these moved to Finland, carrying the gospel message with them. A number were converted and baptized. Thus the Baltic became the fourth baptistry in Europe and Finland a new mission field for the Baptists.

Baptist Chapel at Strandebarm, Hardanger, Norway

The fires were now burning in Germany, in Denmark, in Sweden and in Finland. The message was also carried into Norway and this country was soon moved by its spirit. A number were converted and baptized in the Skager-Rak. Russia was the next to be touched by the refreshing winds of the Holy Spirit and the River Neva was consecrated to the sacred ordinance of Christian baptism.

It is most interesting to observe how the different nations were linked together in the work. An American baptized the first German. A German baptized the

first Dane. A Dane performed the first baptism in Sweden. A Swede did the same for Finland. A Finlander baptized the first convert in St. Petersburg and a Dane the first converts in Norway.

It may seem on account of the rapid spread of the work throughout northern Europe, that it was comparatively easy. Could the courts and prisons of Europe speak, they would tell of such suffering, self-denial and Christian heroism as would compare well with the days of the Inquisition. Stoning, beating, fines, confiscations of property, imprisonment and even banishment were the rewards that were meted out to the early Baptists. These repressive measures, intended to put a quietus upon the movement, only served to give it a greater impulse. The prisons had no terror to those early Baptists. The dungeons were regarded by them rather as their theological seminaries. Here they had ample time to search the Scriptures and when their prison terms were at an end they emerged thoroughly versed in the Bible and greatly strengthened in their faith. These relentless persecutions attracted attention in America. Professors Hackett and Conant were sent as a deputation to Denmark to plead the cause of the persecuted Baptists before the king. Even Lord Palmerston, prime minister of England, interested himself in their behalf. Though the fire of persecution raged fiercely, it could not check the onward movement of the Baptists; it only caused their zeal to glow with greater fervor. Their bitterest enemies admitted that their conduct as citizens and Christians was blameless. They even had a saying, " If we all should be suddenly summoned to give account before the bar of God, the Baptists would stand the best chance."

In the early days the Baptists were practically disfranchised. Their rights of citizenship extended only to the paying of taxes to the state, which gave them no standing, and to the support of the established church, to which, for conscience's sake, they could not belong. They were prohibited from holding positions where

salaries were paid by the state. Their churches were not recognized and hence could hold no real estate. Obedience to the law was always demanded, but protection was rarely granted. Now these conditions are changed. Baptists are eligible to the highest political offices. Quite a few are members of parliament and are themselves lawmakers. Their influence has contributed largely to the bringing in of religious liberty and political equality. Great, immeasurably great, are the results which have sprung from that word spoken in season by the young American student to the German colporteur at Hamburg.

II. THE MISSION IN GERMANY

Under the leadership of Mr. Oncken the first Baptist church in Germany was organized April 23, 1834. Mr. Oncken was ordained as their pastor. Dr. Sears wrote to America pleading for aid to support Oncken that he might continue as their missionary. The appeal was

Baptist Theological Seminary, Hamburg

favorably acted upon by the Society, and within a little more than four years four churches were organized, aggregating 121 members. During the year 1838 twenty-five were baptized in Hamburg, raising the original seven to seventy-five. At Berlin a church had also been organized with G. W. Lehmann as pastor, which office he filled for forty years, and the church has been one of the largest and strongest in Germany. In Oldenburg a church was organized in September, 1838, and one in Stuttgart in October the same year. Several had also been baptized at Marburg and at Jever. Each church was fortunate in being able to choose a pastor of intelligence and education from among their own members.

The Cost of Success

Mr. Oncken was imprisoned several times and his household furniture sold by the police to defray the expenses of his arrest and imprisonment. Persecutions were not confined to Hamburg, but extended to almost every place where the word was preached and the ordinances administered. In Oldenburg, Berlin, Stuttgart, Bavaria, Pomerania and Hanover, the brethren endured cruel mockery, bonds and imprisonment. The ministers were thrown into jail and fined; assemblies were broken up by the police; members were compelled to bring their children to the priests for baptism; in Berlin baptisms in the open air were prohibited; at Marburg the disciples were fined and banished; and in Bavaria they were forced to meet with great secrecy. Memorials were addressed to the Senate of Hamburg by the Society in America and by various bodies of distinguished individuals in the United States and England; and at length the President of the United States through the American consul caused representations to be made which resulted in great advantage to the persecuted missionaries and their people. From that time the members of the church in Hamburg have been free from official annoyance.

The Expanding Work

In 1849 the first meeting of the German Baptist Conference was held in Hamburg, representing about thirty churches and 2,800 members. Within a few years their influence had extended to Russia, Denmark, Switzerland, Lithuania, Silesia and Poland. The question was even raised of withholding further help from America, but it was considered to be better policy to push the work more vigorously than before. Mr. Lehmann, of Berlin, went to England and secured $5,000 to assist in erecting much needed chapels, and in one day twelve young men who had been preparing for the ministry were ordained at Hamburg. In 1865 a colony of German Baptists was sent out to South Africa, and in more recent years there have been emigrations to South America and Australia. Work extended to Bulgaria in 1866 and to Holland in 1869. In 1875 the government of Prussia recognized the existence of Baptist churches and passed an act for their incorporation. Baptist influence has extended throughout all the countries of central Europe and is becoming more firmly intrenched year by year.

The Seminary at Hamburg

The theological seminary was established in October, 1880. Three hundred and sixteen students have (1910) received their training at this institution since its founding. Many of these are successful pastors and missionaries in Germany, Hungary, Roumania, Russia, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, Bohemia, India, Africa and the United States. The success of the seminary has been due very largely to the untiring efforts and wise leadership of Rev. Philipp Bickel, D.D., who, as chairman of the committee of management, has given to the institution his best thought and influence. The recent death of Prof. J. G. Fetzer was a great loss to the seminary. The present faculty consists of the Reverends A. Hess, E. Muller and A. Schive. Preparatory work is provided in the academic department.

The Publishing House

Besides preaching and care of the churches Mr. Oncken conducted a small book store which formed a base of supplies for the colporteurs. In the early years the business was not a success financially. Under the wise management of Dr. Bickel, however, the affairs of the publishing department have enjoyed a steady growth. For some time the business was carried on in the city of Hamburg, but now its headquarters are in Cassel, where a substantial building has been erected with ample room for its various departments.

Baptist Publishing House, Cassel, Germany

Three weekly papers are published, having an aggregate circulation of 111,700 copies weekly, three monthlies with a circulation of 10,000. Besides these, there were distributed last year 191,000 books, 231,500 almanacs, which find a large patronage by the soldiers of the German army, some 6,000,000 pages of tracts, 7,000 Bibles, 28,397 testaments and 198,927 gospels. These products of the press are distributed not only through the German Empire, but also in Hungary, Russia, Switzerland, South Africa and Australia. Such generous scattering of the seed

in the soils of various lands is bound to bring forth a bountiful harvest. About eighty men and women are employed in this department.

The German Baptists support missions in Africa and India, in which fields some 61,700 marks (about $15,500) are expended annually. About 161,000 marks ($40,250) were spent in 1910 for missionary purposes at home, including education, while 917,178 marks ($229,295) were contributed for current expenses of the churches. They now have 200 churches with a membership of 40,696. Baptist churches can now hold property in their corporate right.

III. THE MISSION IN DENMARK

Baptist mission work in Denmark is an outgrowth of that which began in Germany at Hamburg, and was for many years identified with the German mission. Julius Köbner, the founder of the mission, labored with great zeal and wisdom. In spite of the severe persecutions success attended his efforts to a marked degree. In 1842 there were 179 Baptists in the country, of whom 119 were in Copenhagen. The work continued with increasing prosperity, but was still identified in all the reports of the Society with the work in Germany until 1888, when, at the request of the brethren in Denmark, the appropriations were separated from those of the German mission. Since that time the work has been under the direction of a committee in Denmark itself. An earnest and consecrated zeal characterizes the Danish Baptists, who labor on faithfully from year to year with a slow but sure progress. The strength of the work naturally centers in Copenhagen, the capital, where there are three Baptist churches.

The Baptists of Denmark in 1910 numbered 31 churches with an aggregate membership of 4,082. The work was then cared for by forty pastors and missionaries together with some sixty lay preachers. Two schools are maintained, an academy, of which Rev. L. K. Kristof-

fersen is the principal, and a missionary training school under the leadership of Rev. P. Olsen. The academy is open to young men during the winter term and to young women during the summer course. This school has its own buildings located in Jutland. The missionary training school is housed in the *Kristuskapellet* or First Baptist Church, Copenhagen. The book store and publication department is located at Söby in the northern part of Jutland. A weekly paper "The Evangelist," is published, also a weekly Sunday school paper, together with a monthly for the young people. This department is now upon a paying basis.

House where the First Baptist Church in Sweden was Organized

IV. THE MISSION IN SWEDEN

The first Baptist church in Sweden was organized September 21, 1848. Notwithstanding the sternest opposition the work spread with remarkable rapidity, so much so that at the jubilee celebration of the Swedish Baptists in 1898 the records revealed the wonderful fact that the six converts had increased to 60,000 among the living, not to mention the many who in that period of time had passed on to their reward. Mr. Nilson was ordained in 1849 in Hamburg and continued to travel, preach and baptize until the little church numbered fifty-two. But the Lutheran magistrates and priests objected to the administration of the ordinances by

one whose ordination they did not recognize and Mr. Nilson was arrested. Several times he was imprisoned and was eventually banished from his native land. After remaining for a time in Copenhagen he accompanied twenty or thirty Swedish Christians to the United States, where they would be privileged to worship God according to their own conscience.

The truth was not to be left without a witness, however, for God was raising up another leader who was destined eventually to see great enlargement for the cause of the Baptists in Sweden. Andreas Wiberg had been ordained as a Lutheran minister in 1843 and had officiated in the state church until 1849. After a long struggle he came to adopt the principles of the Baptists, was immersed by Mr. Nilson and was ever after a most efficient laborer in connection with the Baptist cause. In 1855, after spending some time in the United States, Mr. Wiberg was appointed superintendent of colportage work in Sweden under the auspices of the American Baptist Publication Society, the work being transferred to the Foreign Mission Society in 1866. Never has a mission field yielded better returns. Sweden is now by far the strongest Baptist mission field in continental Europe. They now count more than 50,000 members in 600 churches. The average number of baptisms are now about 3,000 annually. The work is thoroughly organized under five committees: home mission, foreign mission, publication, Sunday school and church edifice. The money appropriated by the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society is used chiefly to aid in the work of the theological seminary.

Bethel Seminary

The unusual progress of the Baptist work in Sweden is undoubtedly owing to the excellent work done by the Bethel Seminary. This institution, which has been under the strong guiding hand of Dr. K. O. Broady from its inception until recently, has now eight instructors and has trained more than 500 ministers. They have

done and are doing an able service for the Lord in Sweden, Finland, China and America. Rev. C. E. Benander is now the efficient president. A college is greatly needed and plans are already laid for a beginning at an early day.

V. THE MISSION IN NORWAY

Our field farthest north is Norway, the Baptist church at Tromsö being north of the Arctic Circle. The work in Norway was begun in 1860 by Mr. F. L. Rymker of Denmark. In the early years the mission was aided by the Baptist Missionary Society of England, but since 1892 it has been under the fostering care of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the work has enjoyed a steady progress, despite the sternest opposition.

The word "Baptist" was associated in the minds of the people with such odium that they regarded the most brutal opposition as an act of honor in order to rid the country of such heretics. Many a poor man sold his cow to pay his fine, but he was ready to part with anything rather than his conviction and conscience.

A great change has taken place since that time. Then baptisms usually took place under cover of midnight darkness in some secluded spot. Now all things are in the open. At the Jubilee Anniversary in 1910 great banners were strung across the street from the church in Christiania, announcing the place of the Baptist Jubilee Anniversary. The railroads made special concessions to the attending delegates. The king sent his message of congratulations. Even the state church is making concessions. Formerly, no one under nineteen years of age was allowed to withdraw his membership from the church. Now the age has been fixed at fifteen. At the mass meeting of the Jubilee 2,000 persons were present, among them many who had been compelled in former years to pay fines and occupy prison cells because of their Baptist convictions.

The most important advance movement undertaken

at the Jubilee year was the founding of the theological seminary, three students being entered for the first class. This institution will undoubtedly be influential in shaping the future work in Norway. The *Banneret*, a weekly paper, is an exceedingly helpful factor in the upbuilding of the work. A monthly Sunday school paper is also published. In the 40 churches there were in 1910 about 3,700 members. The 39 church edifices were valued at 454,724 kronen ($122,775).

Site of First Baptism in Finland

VI. THE MISSION IN FINLAND

Baptist work in Finland was a direct outgrowth of that in Sweden, Rev. Eric Jansson, the founder, having been first connected with the Swedish Baptist Mission. The first to be baptized in Finland were a Mr. Heikel and his sister, whose father was professor in the University of Abo. They received the ordinance July 14, 1868, on the shores of the Baltic Sea. The mission was for several years reported in connection with the Swedish Mission but with its growing importance it has been given a separate place in the reports and appropriations

of the Foreign Mission Society. The work in this extreme northern border appears to be one of much promise. The recent political changes whereby Finland is being practically absorbed into the Russian Empire, thus losing her identity as a nation, have been of a very trying character. As a consequence the Greek Church is sure to be declared the state church of Finland, in which case even the Lutherans will be considered a dissenting body. This may result in the spiritual benefit of the people as a whole, however, for it will naturally stir them up to think for themselves.

The population of Finland numbers about 2,500,000. Both the Swedish and Finnish languages are spoken and hence the mission work must be carried on in both. On that account the churches are divided into two conferences. They also have two monthly Baptist papers.

VII. THE MISSION IN RUSSIA

Baptist work in Russia, like that in other countries of central Europe, is an outgrowth of the movement which began with the baptism of J. G. Oncken and others at Hamburg in 1834. In 1851 some efforts by German Baptists were made on behalf of their fellow countrymen who had settled in the south of Russia, but such were the difficulties of the work that the first Baptist house of worship in Russia was not built until 1872. The work, however, was entirely identified with the German Mission in the reports to the Foreign Mission Society until 1888, when, owing to the regulations of the Russian Government forbidding religious work to be carried on in that country in the name of foreign organizations, the Baptists in Russia withdrew from the German Baptist Union and formed a *bund* of their own, and our appropriations for work in that country have since been separate from those of the German Mission.

Baptist interests in Russia are represented by two large bodies allied in principle but distinct in organization. The Russian Baptist Union comprises 159

churches of the five associations on the western border of the empire. Two of the associations are among the Letts and Esthonians of the Baltic Provinces. The three others are composed mainly of German-speaking churches in west and south Russia. The Union of Russian Baptist Churches, the formation of which has been possible only since the granting of religious freedom, includes churches of native Russians who for the most part have come out from the Orthodox Church. These churches, while found in all parts of the empire, are particularly strong in the southern provinces. Pastor W. Pawloff, of Odessa, has been chosen president of the Union of Russian Baptist Churches. Rev. F. Brauer, of Nikolajew, is president of the Russian Baptist Union. It has been impossible to secure the figures for the native Russian churches, but their leaders estimate that they would equal if not exceed those for the older organization. More than fifty Russian traveling evangelists in addition to the local pastors are maintained in different parts of the empire.

The decree granting religious liberty, while restricted in its operation by the arbitrary action of local government officers, has revealed the fact that all over Russia there existed communities of Baptists who when free from fear of persecution began at once to propagate their faith with an earnestness and zeal that have brought about a great spiritual awakening. Eight Baptist associations already exist in Russia. In southern Russia Baptist churches are springing up by scores. In Russian Poland fifty-nine Baptist churches have come into existence since 1905, when the Edict of Toleration went into effect. The Lodz church has now (1910) 1,559 members and that at Lucinow 848. Hungary is being swept by this movement, the increase in the number of Baptist churches in that country in one year being twelve and the increase in membership over 4,000. The church at Bekessaba, only three years old in 1910, had then 250 members, and that at Homotod, less than one year old, had 180 members, carrying on work in

twenty out-stations. In Roumania remarkable history is being made. One Baptist evangelist has baptized 8,000 people in the last twenty years, 280 converts having been baptized by him during August, 1910. All classes are being reached and all eastern Europe is being set on fire with religious zeal. It is thought by some who have studied the subject that Baptists of eastern Europe today are second in number only to those of the United States.

Largest Baptist Church in Poland, at Lodz

The Baptists of Russia have passed through great persecutions, which have proceeded chiefly from the priests of the Greek Church, who, since that is the national church, make use of the officers of the government to carry out their bigoted and cruel plans. Whole churches have been arrested, clad in prison garments and amid great suffering compelled to travel as prisoners with loathsome and evil companions into the Trans-Caucasian country or into Siberia. Many Baptists are now found in this sterile and desolate land. Some have even been driven to its far borders, there to drag out a miserable existence amid the degraded and ignorant savages of northern Siberia. In one instance an entire Baptist church in the Baltic provinces decided to emigrate to South America. All sold their property, closed up their business affairs, and the richer helping the poorer, they left their dearly loved homes to find a place in a

more hospitable land, where they could worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. The scenes of their departure from their home were exceedingly affecting, and as they sailed away they sang hymns to God, while the tears were streaming down their faces. They are now in Brazil and have formed two churches which have received help from the missionaries of the Southern Baptist Convention.

VIII. THE MISSION IN FRANCE

In 1832, at a meeting of the Triennial Convention, as the Foreign Mission Society was then known, a strong appeal was presented for so enlarging the field of operations as to include France, Germany and Greece. The terrible religious condition of the first named country appealed strongly to the members of the convention and after due consideration the board requested Prof. Ira Chase of Newton Theological Institution to go to France on a tour of investigation. He was accompanied by Mr. J. C. Rostan, a Frenchman, who expected to remain in France if the outlook should prove encouraging. They secured a small place of worship in Paris, where they held frequent meetings and spent much time in personal visitation among the people. Prof. Chase also found, especially in the northern part of France, several Christian churches holding substantially Baptist views, although mixed with more or less corruption. Mr. Rostan had several interviews with General Lafayette and members of the Chamber of Deputies, explaining the object of his mission and was treated with much consideration. Prof. Chase's report to the board was of such an encouraging nature that they decided to continue the work. The services of Mr. Rostan, however, were cut short by his death in the year following his return to France.

Isaac Wilmarth was the first worker to be regularly appointed to the French Mission and reached Paris in June, 1834. The first Baptist church in Paris was

organized May 10, 1835, with six members, and two days later four more were baptized. Two additional missionaries were soon sent out, Rev. Erastus Willard and Rev. David N. Sheldon, the latter opening a school for theological students, a work for which large hopes were entertained, but which have never yet been realized. In 1837, on account of failing health, Mr. Wilmarth was obliged to relinquish the work and soon after Mr. Sheldon also withdrew, leaving Mr. Willard the only American missionary on the field. Up to this time seven churches had been organized, with a total membership of 142; several helpers had been developed from among the people themselves; and a pastor had been placed over each church. In spite of the religious apathy of the country at large there was much to encourage the missionaries.

Baptist Chapel at La Fère, France

In 1848 Dr. T. T. Devan, formerly a missionary to China, joined the French Mission, but remained only five years. Mr. Willard withdrew in 1856 and since then the work has been almost entirely in the hands of the French brethren themselves, with only financial aid from America. The work was extended into different parts of France, churches multiplied and there was an encouraging increase in membership. During the Franco-Prussian War nearly all the men entered the army,

but the Lord preserved many of them and their families, so that the cause did not suffer.

A New Day Dawns

In the meantime a new influence for evangelical religion was making itself felt in the great city of Paris. Mr. R. W. McAll, a young Englishman and a devoted Christian, happening to be in Paris shortly after one of the communistic uprisings which were more or less frequent, was preaching the gospel to a company of workingmen. Said one to him, "If you have anything real to tell us I can bring thousands to hear you, but we are tired of this empty formalism." Mr. McAll accepted this as a challenge from the people and decided to devote himself to evangelistic work among them. The success of the effort was phenomenal; the mission halls were crowded night after night and many for the first time experienced forgiveness and peace. It was the most remarkable movement ever known in that great city. Mr. McAll might well be called the Moody of Paris. The work grew to such proportions that an assistant became necessary, and through the leading of Providence Mr. Reuben Saillens joined the mission. Mr. Saillens had been brought up under strong evangelical influence, his father being an evangelist in the Independent Church of France. He himself as a young man had known the joy of preaching Christ and of seeing men turn from sin to serve the living God. To prepare himself for more extensive work he had become a student at the East London Institute, under Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, and it was while pursuing his studies there that he was called to assist in the McAll mission in Paris.

The influence of the McAll mission led to a general revival in all the Protestant churches in Paris and our Baptist pastors worked in the greatest harmony with the mission. Mr. Saillens had long been in sympathy with Baptist principles, having always believed in immersion. He now became deeply interested in the

development of Baptist work in France. In 1888, while still retaining his connection with the McAll work, he became acting pastor of the Baptist church in Rue de Lille. Mr. McAll himself at length recognized the desirability of organizing the work along more strictly denominational lines and favored the establishment of organized churches. In 1889 Mr. Saillens organized the second Baptist church in Paris and began to hold services in a hall in Rue St. Denis. The year 1891 may be said to mark an epoch in the history of the work under review. After much thought Mr. Saillens had decided to with-

Baptist Chapel, Denain, France

draw from the McAll Mission and to give all his time and influence to Baptist mission work. He was elected the general secretary of the French Baptist Missionary Committee, with oversight of the work in the entire field. The revival which had begun in 1888 now increased in power and the churches were greatly strengthened. This revival may be said to have been due in a large measure to the work of the veteran preacher Rev. J. B. Cretin, who with immense industry and persever-

ance had been preparing and distributing Baptist tracts and literature, circulating them largely at his own expense. In fifteen months the two churches in Paris nearly doubled their membership; the Rue de Lille church had four mission halls and the Rue St. Denis two, aside from constant daily meetings in their own halls.

Enlarging Their Borders

The enlargement of the work has naturally necessitated some organization and the entire field is now under the direction of two committees, known as the Franco-Belgian and the Franco-Swiss Committees. Under the care of the first come the churches in the northern part of the country and those in Belgium; the Franco-Swiss Committee has charge of those in the east of France and in French-speaking Switzerland. The history of the Baptist movement in French Switzerland is full of interest. A very godly man, Pastor Robert, of Neuchâtel, died and left a church which was practically Baptist, all having been immersed. His influence had extended into many of the surrounding towns, among which was Tramelan, a village situated high up in the Jura Mountains. Mr. Saillens heard of them and paid them a visit. When they learned of the Baptist churches in France and saw that they were identical with them in faith and practise, they decided to come over bodily and associate themselves with them.

As yet the Baptists of France have no theological school. Their ministerial students usually take their preparatory course with one of the pastors and then later they are sent to some Baptist seminary in England, generally to Spurgeon's college. A summer school is held each year at Morges, near Chexbres, with two or three hundred persons in attendance. These consist of pastors, evangelists, colporteurs and lay workers from all parts of the French-speaking countries. The purpose of this summer school is to study the Bible, which is the chief text-book, and the best teachers who can be secured are engaged.

In each of the centers the work is being faithfully and aggressively pushed. In Nîmes the church is enthusiastic and active. In Nice, an important center, strong efforts are being made to secure a greatly needed chapel. The church at Colombes is now rejoicing in a new building. Work has been opened in the historic city of Rheims, which is an industrial center with a population of about 110,000. A movable hall is used in reaching the people in the various parts of the city.

IX. THE MISSION IN SPAIN

Prof. William I. Knapp was the founder of Baptist mission work in Spain. He established himself in independent missionary work in Madrid in 1869 and afterwards applied to the Foreign Mission Society for assistance, which was granted. In 1870 Rev. John W. Terry was appointed a missionary, but remained in the country only a few months. Despite the limited missionary force, however, the mission received great en-

A Spanish Village

couragement in its earlier years. Eighteen were baptized in 1870 and August 10 of that year the First Baptist church in Madrid was organized with thirty-three members. Several Spanish evangelists were raised up, among them Rev. G. S. Benoliel, who for several years was pastor of the Madrid church and whose preaching attracted great attention. A church was formed in Valencia in 1871 and a number were received in Alicante. Some work was also done in Portugal and a number of converts were baptized in that country, forty-one in Linares; but the promising work in that country was broken up by persecution. In 1874 there were four churches with four native pastors and evangelists and a total number in membership of two hundred and forty-four. Mr. Knapp returned to the United States in 1876 and the work was then continued by native laborers.

In 1885 the Society had but one missionary laboring in Spain, Rev. Eric Lund, of Sweden, who began work at Barcelona, in the northeastern part of the country. Since that time this has been the headquarters of our Baptist mission, but its influence has been felt in various outlying districts. Much work was done in publishing tracts and distributing portions of scripture, and a few converts were gathered. In 1886 Mr. Lund was joined by Rev. Manuel C. Marin, a native of Spain, and a graduate of Colby and Newton. These brethren adopted new features of evangelistic work by which series of meetings were held in different villages and the few converts gathered were organized into small, independent churches, one of the members in each being placed over them as a leader. This method of work met with considerable success, but the mission in Spain has had to encounter many and great obstacles in the bigotry of the priests and the ignorance and indifference of the people. About the time of the breaking out of the war with Spain the Society considered the matter of discontinuing its efforts in that country, but at Mr. Lund's earnest solicitation a small appropriation was continued.

One of the most effective means of disseminating the truth has been through Christian literature, which has been scattered in various countries aside from Spain where the same language is spoken. Some interesting and faithful converts have been won from year to year, and it is believed the future will witness greater triumphs.

When the Foreign Mission Society was contemplating work in the Philippine Islands, Mr. Lund was thought of, as his familiarity with the Spanish language and with a Roman Catholic people gave him special fitness for the undertaking. Some years before, a native of the Philippine Islands, Braulio Manikan by name, had come to Spain to study civil engineering. Through a train of circumstances he made the acquaintance of Mr. Lund, and was converted. When it was proposed that Mr. Lund should go to the Philippines, this Filipino was ready to go with him. After Manikan's conversion he began translating into his own language parts of the gospels and certain tracts and consequently he and Mr. Lund were able to take with them Christian literature already prepared for the people in the Islands.

Aside from the direct evangelistic work for Spain itself two other important features have sprung up from the work of our missionaries: first, Mr. Lund's long experience among the Spanish-speaking people fitted him most admirably for his greater work in the Philippines; second, without the work of the Baptists and other Protestants in Spain the present breaking up of the Roman Catholic power would have been impossible. Mr. Lund, writing from the Philippines, says: "I need not remind you that Spain is an interesting field and will become more so in the future. The Protestants have become a strong contributing factor to the position taken by the premier in his stand for religious freedom. In this land, where once Paul labored, we Baptists should insist upon having strong footing."

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